A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, November 2. 1708.

Review. DO you hear, Mr. *Lunatick*, a Word with you?

Mad Man. I am buſie, Sir, I have a Stranger with me juſt come from the Army, and the Siege of *Liſle*.

Rev. If you were not a *Mad Man*, you ought to be made an Example of for your laſt Diſcourſe.

M. What, about our *Engliſh* Engineers?

Rev. Yes, and for reproaching the Government for not having Engineers of our own.

M. You are a Slanderer in that; I do not reproach the Government; the Government is no more to blame, that *Engliſh* Men will not be Engineers, than that *Yorkſhire* Men are not *Negroes*; if the Breed had been *Negroes*, *Yorkſhire* Men had been *Negroes*, and the Government might not have wanted them——— If I had been able to ſay, there were good, able, experienc'd Engineers at home; and the Government would not entertain them or encourage them, ſomething might have been ſaid againſt the Government; but how ſhould the Government get them? Where are they? In all our Univerſities and Colleges, where are the Men that bend their Mind to this Study? And if the Land does not produce them, how ſhould the Government have them?

Rev. Well,

Rev. Well, but I know the Complaint is, The Government does not encourage them.

M. That is, the Government does not encourage Pretenders—Truly, that would be the Way to have Crowds of such People about them. But tell us, where is the Engineer or Artist in *England*, *that way*, that the Government has discouraged or refused to entertain? And if not, you must blame the Clime or the Age, the Humour and Sloth of our People, not the Government.

Rev. But why should not *English* Men be as good Mathematicians as other People?

M. Why should not *Wales* breed as good Cows as *Lincolnshire*, or *Norfolk* as good Wool as *Northamptonshire*? Every Clime and every Soil has its proper Produce; *Yorkshire* for Horses, *Essex* for Calves, *France* for Engineers, and *England* for Fools; all Things follow the Dictates of Climate, Soil, and Circumstances; Engineers are not an *English* Breed, the Climate does not nourish such Plants, or if they do grow up a little, they never come to any thing, they won't come to Maturity, and who have we to blame for it? Never say the Government does not encourage them; if there were Men of Brains, and Heads that apply'd to Things of that Nature, their own Merit would find them out, and the Government would be glad to employ them.

Rev. Thou art a bitter Fellow, I thought *Bedlam* had had nothing so ill-natur'd in it.

M. A mad Man cannot be ill-natur'd; but mad Men always speak Truth.

Rev. But we really have a great many very skilful Artists, great Mathematicians, and compleat Masters now in Being.

M. Compleat Masters! Pray, what do you call compleat Masters? Your great Artists! Where are they, and what are they doing? They seem to me to look like my Lord *Rochesters*'s Fools, that

Retire to think, cause they have nought to do.

These are the Men of Lines and Angles, the *So-so's* of the Age, that study to know but not to serve, as if Thought was not given for Actions to serve the Government, and Men were to be Masters of an Art to do Mankind no Service; I think, if there are such People as these, they ought to be press'd like Seamen, who being Masters of an Employ, that in its Nature is for publick Service; the publick Good ought to command their Service, when National Exigencies require it———

Rev. But *English* Liberty!

M. English Liberty requires, that Men should apply to the Defence of their Country, all the Skill and Art they have attained. When the Queen travels, or Troops march, we press Carriages and Horses, and think, it is no Oppression or Invasion upon *English* Liberty to do so, if they are paid for their Labour; and I think, if there are any of these needful People call'd Engineers in this Kingdom, they ought to be found out, and oblig'd to serve their Country, and *to be let know*, That they cannot excuse themselves from Payment of the Debt.

Rev. I am of your Mind there.

M. But I differ from you in one Thing.

Rev. What's that?

M. Why, that there are really any such People in *England*; I do not believe there is one Man among them fit to be employ'd in the Siege of *Deal* Castle, or knows how to attack an old Windmill.

Rev. Yes, yes, they have read long upon the Subject.

M. Right, read long, and seen nothing, like the two old Scholars of *Leyden*, that disputed on two Mens Qualifications; one was a Scholar without Learning, and the other was Learned, but no Scholar———

And

And they all agreed, the Scholar without Learning was the better Man——— Not that I deſpiſe Learning; we have a great many learned People in our College of *Bedlam*, eſpecially of your poring, Language-driving, Nothing-acting Scholars——— But theſe Sort of uſeleſs Scholars, that are doing nothing, ever learning, knowing and informing themſelves, but never practiſing; theſe I think the moſt uſeleſs People in the World, and ſuch are all the Pretenders to Engineering in *England*, that ever I ſaw.

Rev. Well, what's the End of all this?

M. The End of it is, That it was not the *Engliſh* Engineers at *Liſle* that made the Siege ſo long——— For to tell you the Truth, we had none there, and which is worſe, none any where elſe that are worth naming, when we talk of ſuch a Town as *Liſle*, and ſuch a Siege.

Rev. I doubt there is too much Truth in it.

M. Nay, this Foreigner here, that is with me, if you were to hear him tell you, and you could underſtand what he ſays, of what the People in his Country ſay was the Cauſe *Liſle* was ſo long in Taking, you would be more ſurpriz'd than before.

Rev. What ſays he of it?

M. Nay, ask him———Aſk him what he ſays about five *Engliſh* N.... men in the Trenches, who betray'd all Things to the *French*, and hinder'd all the Attacks; it muſt needs be a ſad Story.

Rev. I ſhould be ſorry to hear that indeed; pray do you ask him?

M. He ſays, he will tell it you all next Time we meet.

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They continue to meet by the Parliament-Stairs in Old-Pallace-Yard; *There is a Note on the Door, where daily Attendance is given from Ten in the Morning until Night———. If Any are not apprehenſive of the Certainty of the Succeſs, they may come and have full Satisfaction, that they may have their Money if they will.*

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